



LIGHTNING 6 SENDS



7 May 2010

Tropic Lightning Change of Mission

To the High Performing Tropic Lightning Division,

Today [7 May], the Secretary of Defense and Department of the Army announced the 25th Infantry Division Headquarters will return to Iraq in December 2010. This decision is, in large part, a result of the truly magnificent work that Task Force Lightning performed during its last deployment to Northern Iraq and the remarkable reputation earned.

This news comes as we are approaching the end of Operation Iraqi Freedom, a critically important chapter of our history in Iraq. The 25th ID played a critical role in writing this chapter and setting the conditions that have allowed Iraqis to assume ever-increasing responsibility for their future. We are very proud of their accomplishments. On 1 September 2010, Operation New Dawn will mark the start of the final chapter of the role of U.S. forces in Iraq. Although termed the point at which “all combat forces are out of Iraq”, the transition actually represents something far more important and positive: the emergence of a stable, self-reliant Iraqi nation that is prepared to fully assume the mantles of security, governance, and economic prosperity. This is Iraq’s success and we will deploy to assist them in maintaining momentum in building empowered security forces, civil capacity, and economic development .

I want to assure you that I understand – and deeply appreciate – the sacrifices that you have all made and will continue to make in the future. Our success depends upon your support for and dedication to our mission and each other. The Tropic Lightning Division is renowned for the tales of glory it has written in its nearly 89 years. I look forward to writing the next tale of glory with you.

Tropic Lightning!

Bernard S. Champoux

Major General, United States Army
Commanding